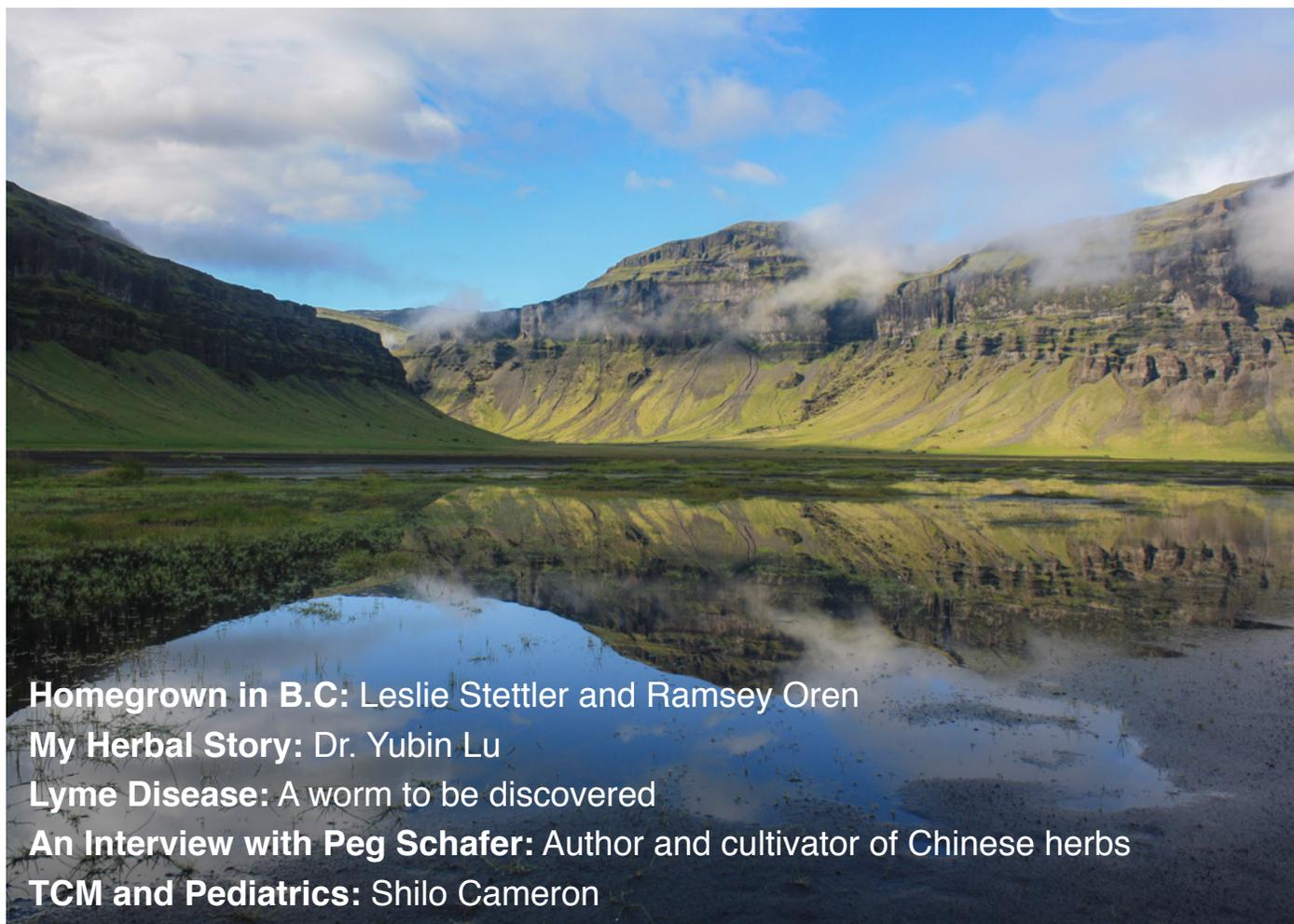


Summer 2015

# MEDICINAL ROOTS 相慧 MAGAZINE

*Ancient Wisdom - Modern Healthcare*



Homegrown in B.C: Leslie Stettler and Ramsey Oren

My Herbal Story: Dr. Yubin Lu

Lyme Disease: A worm to be discovered

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# MRM's 7 Questions

One of our aims at MRM is the desire to inspire and connect the TCM profession. As part of this dream, we developed a set of 7 simple questions to help us feature different practitioners and influential people in the field of TCM.

In this issue, we catch up with Dr. John Stan, Dr.TCM, owner of Eastern Currents Distributing.



#### 1. What inspired you to pursue TCM?

In my teens I studied Martial Arts and fell in love with the beauty of Chinese inner alchemy. Back then, it was all so new. In fact, think if you ask any male practitioner in his 50's and 60's this same question I bet the majority would give you the same answer,... watching Kung Fu movies or going or studying Martial Arts would have been the vector that brought them into TCM.

In high school, I was on track to enter engineering and did so. During my first year of engineering I got a sense of where my life was heading. I had visions of tedious paperwork and being bound in a structure with not too much creative freedom. So for me, as much as I enjoyed the precision of engineering and the scientific method, I was much more drawn to philosophy and religious studies so I switched tracks after my first year. It was during my first class on Buddhist studies (which incidentally, was being taught by a six-foot-six Buddhist monk of Jewish descent

from Boston) that I became inspired to pursue TCM. During one of his lectures back in 1983, he mentioned how the profession of acupuncture was growing in the states and a school called the New England School of Acupuncture was now training people to perform acupuncture as a profession. That was when the penny dropped for me and I knew then that this was going to be my path. Acupuncture and TCM had all the technical precision that I loved, but it also incorporated the intriguing concepts of Qi and integrated the body, mind, and spirit. Shortly after that, I left Ontario and came to BC to study at the Canadian College of Oriental Medicine which was the first full-time English school of TCM to be formed in Canada. I was in that first class which started back in 1985.

2. Who was your greatest influence? Personally or professionally. There are so many that it would be hard to say or name one. The image that comes to my mind when I think of this question is the stars in the night sky.

Each star represents a teacher or teaching that has inspired or influenced me. My night sky is full of a multitude of lights representing teachers/teachings from all traditions and systems. Some brighter than others for sure, but the main light like the North star through which all of the other teachings revolve around are inspirations offered to me by my Mother and Father. They inspired me to live life with honesty, integrity and curiosity.

techniques to resolve problems. In fact I am a big advocate of learning as many skills as one can. I have coined the term “Poly-paradigm Healing” to reflect how practitioners are learning each other’s methods while staying true to each system. I see this as being the big multidisciplinary trend of the future.

Specifically for our TCM profession, in order for us to really stand up and make a difference in the healthcare landscape, we need to collectively hold the vision high for what we really are and that, I believe, is being experts on cultivating Life. When we do that, we completely change the dynamic of the “them vs. us” with other health professionals. We position ourselves as Health Cultivators, thus enabling us to focus on the roots of our tradition which is Yang Sheng or Nurturing Life. No other health profession does so in the comprehensive way we do in TCM and this is our huge opportunity!

Marketing our profession from this angle will give us big payoff and allow us to play an essential role in the healthcare arena. I challenge all TCM practitioners to develop the language and ways to express the physics of yin, yang and the five phases in a way that is contemporary. By doing so, we feature our Whole System Wellness model of health and can offer the following advertisement to the public... “Pain? We can get rid of that, and at the same time help you thrive in life!” Who can resist that?

### 5. What inspired you to start Eastern Currents?

I started Eastern Currents out of a personal need as a new practitioner to have a company that brought everything together in one place. I needed a supplier that offered me good quality professional products that I could feel confident and proud to offer my patients. Back when I started in the late 80s, there were suppliers, but they were all about selling their product to me at any cost. There wasn’t a company that offered me answers to my detailed questions about quality and consistency. Back then, TCM was in a grey zone and we were really suspect as new

acupuncture/TCM practitioners. Cheap herbal medicines were available from many sources, there were negative connotations about herbs and our “voodoo” medicine. To fight back against that negative image of TCM products and acupuncture as a healing system, I focused on getting reliable, professional and high-quality products for use in my clinic. I discovered that this was not going to be an easy process as a lot of the herb suppliers did not provide validated COAs or gave me straight answers for questions that I asked.

Needles were a similar game. None of the distributors were really forthcoming about why one needle was really cheap, or why another was very expensive. If you can believe it, in the late 80s and early 90s no one knew that some needles were coated with silicone or other lubricants. It was during my exploration into quality and pricing that I finally found out that some needles were coated. Once I found that out, I discovered that different manufacturers would do anything to lower the cost while still promoting the illusion of quality. So instead of using medical-grade silicone, they would use machine oil to make their needles “super smooth”. Then there was the quality of stainless steel used to make the needles, another maze of vague answers and half-truths. For me at that time it was a nightmare trying to get answers and then determining if what I was being told about a product was in fact true. It was during that time when I was questioning and researching products that I found some great companies that made quality products and stood behind them with comprehensive data and details.

That was when I recognized that my need for the assurance of professional-grade products was not just mine, but one that was shared by all new practitioners in our TCM profession. I then created Eastern Currents Distributing as a service for my colleagues so that we could bring our profession to the highest standard here in Canada. Eastern Currents was thus born in the back room of my clinic

on Dunbar Street in Vancouver in the early 90s. I did the research on every product and my colleagues that started to use our products felt confident in their practice that what they offered to their patients was safe and reliable. This was my starting philosophy and continues to this day to be our company mission. The important service we offer to clinicians is one of validation. We are here to watch your back and make sure that the products are vetted and reliable.

The learning division of Eastern Currents was born of the same need. Back in the early 90s I wanted to stay at the top of my game and offer my patients the best techniques that were known. I started to organize weekend workshops for colleagues to ensure my own upgrading of skills. Over the years we have brought in hundreds of leading teachers and experts to various cities in Canada to provide practitioners with continuing education. This aspect of our company over the last few years has also gone online and become an international hub of e-learning opportunity. Something I am very proud to have been part of.

Nowadays, Eastern Currents employs an incredible team of individuals that hold the same values and work with dedication to serve practitioners and their practices. From sourcing products, taking orders, and shipping them out each day, our team is exceptional and committed to growing the TCM profession.

### 6. If you could bring a fictional character to life, who would it be?

Lobsang Rampa is the first character that comes to mind. In my late teens and early twenties I read this whole series of books supposedly written by a Tibetan Monk with paranormal abilities. They were colourful, imaginative, and he represented the ideal for me (at the time) of an “enlightened man”. The real story behind the books was also fascinating as the author was actually a British plumber who claims he was inhabited by the spirit of Lobsang. The plumber eventually changed his name to Lobsang

### 3. What do you love most about your practice?

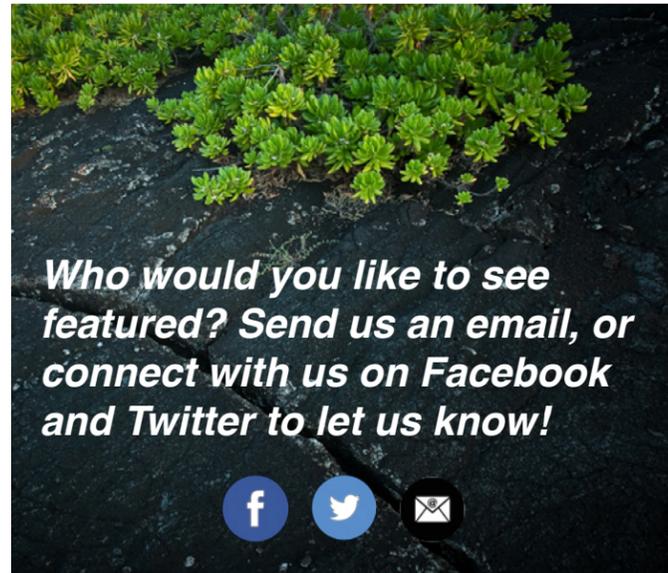
What I love most is having the opportunity to inspire and precipitate change in an individual. Understanding the physics of energetic relationships in Nature gives me the most profound way to experience my patients. It allows me to see them for what they truly are, which is an awesome, unique, changing, multidimensional reflection/expression of Nature. As a practitioner of TCM, I have the honour of working with them to not only resolve their chief complaint but to then move onward to inspire them to incorporate new lifestyle processes (based on TCM health philosophy) to help them cultivate a life full of Qi! TCM, as a whole-systems approach to health and vitality, gives all TCM practitioners the power to help our patients tremendously, - and that, for me, is very exciting.

### 4. Where do you see the profession heading in the next 10 years?

Interesting question, because that depends on our collective vision as TCM practitioners. If we stay in the state of “us (TCM) versus them (Western Medicine)”, the competition for available healthcare dollars will keep us in a long struggle. Or if we become like “them” i.e. treating patients from the disease model of health care ... “Patient victim, Practitioner the rescuer” here again, we will always be trying to one up them by bringing anything we can to the table to “fix the problem”. Evidence of this is already happening as TCM practitioners are learning other therapies to solve the patient’s “problem”; hence other methods are becoming vogue such as injection therapy, anatomical acupuncture and so on. Don’t get me wrong, I am all about learning new tricks and

Rampa. He carried on writing a total of 18 books on the true story of this disembodied monk whom he claimed he channeled.

7. **In an alternate universe, if you could choose any other job, what would it be?** I would be, in that alternate world, a grade school or high school teacher. Young minds are so full of potential. I know with the right kind of support and material (I am thinking here of course introducing TCM philosophy into the curriculum at an early age), kids and young teenagers can make huge difference in the world while living healthy lives. That would be very rewarding.



## HOMEGROWN IN B.C

**About the authors:** Leslie Stettler and Ramsey Oren, a husband and wife team continue to research and experiment on the growing of local TCM herbs on their property in Abbotsford, B.C. Leslie holds a Master of Arts degree in Leadership and Training in the education sector.

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*It was a hot summer day in June of 2011 when we travelled down to Puyallup, Washington,*

...from our home in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia. We were both very excited to take in some workshops on raising chickens, solar energy and aquaculture at the Mother Earth News Fair. Eager to practice sustainable ways of living so that they could be implemented on our modest 1/2 acre property, we came to this mecca of sustainability to quench our thirst.

While we did learn a lot about raising chickens over those three days in June, it was a workshop by Peg Schafer called "Opportunities in growing Traditional Chinese Medicinal Herbs" which really grabbed our attention and became an increasing focus in our lives for the next four years.



*Scutellaria Baicalensis/Huang qin*

Peg explained to us that the quality and availability of Traditional Chinese Medicinal herbs was being eroded because of the environmental degradation of the soil, air and water in China, where most of these herbs were being grown. Some of the herbs were on their way to extinction and on the endangered species list. The prospects for the future were indeed worrisome.

Peg and a few other growers in the United States have been trying to provide another source for TCM herbs for more than a decade. Peg's farm has been operating since 1997 in which time they have grown over 300 different herbs, mostly TCM. They are currently selling many varieties of herbs and seeds. Without any extensive advertising, Peg has been able to sell all her supply from her farm in Petaluma, California. Demand has been overwhelming. Clearly there had to be many more growers in North America to sustain the needs of TCM practitioners.



*Salvia Miltiorrhiza/Dan shen*

Unwittingly we became the foot soldiers of a new movement, the establishment of a local supply for TCM herbs. After having bought some of the herb seeds from Peg at the fair and from subsequent workshops we brought them across the border to our new 'secret garden'. Out of the eight selected herb varieties Leslie planted, all eventually germinated and grew in our organic soil. There are over 100 TCM herbs which can be grown in our southwestern B.C. climate zone.

A constant source of inspiration and encouragement came from our association with the North West Asian Medicinal Herb Network, based out of Washington state. The group was formed by local interested growers and



*Agastache Rugosa/Tu huo*

practitioners and together they encouraged a collaborative approach to growing TCM herbs. It was likely that a more diverse arrangement of growers would be able to provide more varieties than a centralized system. Also, a cooperative would be a good model for sharing information on successful growing techniques.

It soon became apparent that a major hurdle wasn't going to be growing the herbs, but gaining acceptance from TCM practitioners on the use of a locally grown product. There would need to be quality evaluation of our herbs and we would have to learn to harvest and dry them properly. The necessity for TCM practitioners and growers to cooperate in this pursuit was proving to be self evident. This is what the North West Asian Medicinal Herb Network has continued to do over the last few years, and the fruits of their efforts are starting to show. In British Columbia, a workshop held recently in the city of Victoria at the Pacific Rim College brought together two dozen growers and practitioners to learn about growing TCM herbs.



*Angelica Sinensis/Dang Gu*

There is certainly a feeling now that we are on the cusp of a wider transition to the use of locally grown TCM herbs to help fill the needs for a quality organic supply. A number of challenges loom on the horizon including the establishment of an association in British Columbia to bring together growers and practitioners to share information and strategies, collaboration with

educational institutions to provide research on best practices for growing, cultivation and harvesting of the herbs, and the promotion of the benefits for small organic farmers to include the growing of TCM herbs.

We came to this endeavor with the intention to find out which TCM herbs will grow on our property. That was our first step and a relatively easy one. The next stage, that of convincing ourselves of its economic viability, is much more difficult to achieve. So many questions: which herbs have the best return on investment of time and resources, do we have enough land to grow a consistent supply on a larger scale, will we have to build a drying shed, how will we convince practitioners to agree to buy our product and how big are we willing to become in TCM herb production. We are convinced that if we go ahead we must have the support of a strong cooperative association. We can't go it alone.

There are some significant initiatives being considered at Kwantlen University in B.C which can further this transition to local TCM herb growing. There is a plan to establish a Chinese Herb Garden as they have a large horticultural department and have import licenses for seeds and plants. This will be linked to a Bachelors degree in Chinese Medicine program at the Richmond campus which has plans to start in September 2016. The government of British Columbia appointed a parliamentary secretary for TCM which eventually led to the establishment of this program, the first in a public institution in this province. The stated objective at that time was to give British Columbians more choice and greater options in health care.

In the process of learning how to grow TCM herbs over the last few years and through our association with the Pacific North West Asian Herb Network it has been made clear to us that it is in the self interest of TCM practitioners to support and collaborate with aspiring and existing growers of TCM herbs as the future of their own medicinal practice may rely at least in part on a local and continental production and supply.

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***The three months of summer,  
they denote opulence and blossoming.  
The qi of heaven and earth interact and the myriad beings  
bloom and bear fruit.  
Go to rest late at night and rise early.  
Never get enough of the sun.  
Let the mind have no anger.  
Stimulate beauty and have your elegance perfected.  
Cause the qi to flow away,  
as if that what you loved were located outside.  
This is correspondence with the qi of summer and  
it is the Way to nourish growth.  
Opposing it harms the heart.  
In autumn this causes jie and malaria, and  
there is little to support gathering.  
Multiple disease [develops] at winter solstice.***

***Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen  
Chapter 2-9-3***

# My Herbal Story

## by Dr. Yubin Lu

### An in depth look at:

#### **Ru Xiang Ru Xiang (Olibanum, Frankincense)**

This is the coagulated resin of a kind of palm tree, and has a strong smell. Resin is the fluid of the tree, just like the blood of the human body. It enters the Blood and moves Blood because the strong smell helps Qi to move. When Blood and Qi can move smoothly, pain will be relieved, swelling will subside and the new tissues will grow in the wound. Since tree resin mainly functions to heal the wound of tree bark, this herb serves as an important herb in the treatment of traumatic injury.

#### **Pairs with:**

- Xue Jie, Mo Yao for traumatic injury. Formula: Qi Li San
- Bai Zhi, Jin Yin Hua, Mo Yao for swelling and pain associated with carbuncles. Formula: Xian Fang Huo Ming Yin.
- Mo Yao as a topical application for carbuncles that fail to heal after rupture. Formula: Hai Fu San

**1.** For traumatic injury, it is often used together with Xue Jie, Mo Yao, etc., such as Qi Li San. For carbuncles or swelling with pain, used together with Bai Zhi, Jin Yin Hua, Mo Yao, etc., such as Xian Fang Huo Ming Yin. For carbuncles that fail to heal after rupture, it can be used together with Mo Yao in powder externally, such as Hai Fu San.

#### **Pain due to Qi and Blood stagnation:**

- Yuan Hu Suo, Xiang Fu, to treat Stomach pain
- Dan Shen, Chuan Xiong to treat Chest Bi and heart pain

- Dan Shen, Dang Gui and Mo Yao to treat dysmenorrhea or amenorrhea
- Qiang Huo, Fang Feng, Dang Gui to treat arthritis due to Wind Cold Dampness

**2.** For pain due to Qi and Blood stagnation. When used with Yuan Hu, Xiang Fu, it can treat stomach pain. When used together with Dan Shen, Chuan Xiong, it treats Chest Bi and heart pain. When used with Dan Shen, Dang Gui and Mo Yao, it treats dysmenorrhea or amenorrhea. It also treats arthritis due to wind cold dampness when used together with Qiang Huo, Fang Feng and Dang Gui.

**Jin Yin Hua  
(Lonicerae Flos, Honeysuckle flower)**  
Jin Yin Hua is the bud of the Lonicera (honeysuckle) flower. The plant has long, thin and hollow branches that grow upward. When blooming, it has white flowers first, which gradually turn yellow and finally you see white and yellow flowers at the same time.

The small, long, thin and hollow branches that grow upward indicate that this herb has the ability to disperse. The white color can signify the Wei level, dampness or pus. While the yellow color indicates the Qi level, Blood or Heat. Turning from white to yellow is similar to the process of pathogenic Heat entering the Qi level from the Wei level or from the Qi level to the Ying level. In addition, the coexistence of the white and yellow color may also suggest coexistence of Damp Heat or pus and blood. So, this herb can clear heat and detoxify, treating both the Wei level and the Qi level, or both the Qi level and the Ying level at the same time. It is also specifically used

to treat dysentery in which there is both pus and blood in the stools. As an herb that can clear toxic Heat, it also serves as an important herb in the treatment of carbuncles, etc.

#### **Dang Gui (Angelicae Sinensis Radix, Chinese angelica root)**

Dang Gui is an herb in Chinese medicine that looks like a comet, with a head and tail. When you look at Dang Gui, you can see it is a pretty moist herb, and the head is dense, while the tail is more sharp and separated. So the head can nourish Blood, while the tail can move Blood, and the whole can do both. In addition, because it is moist, it can also moisten Blood, treating Blood dryness manifesting as flaking and peeling dry skin in skin disorders.

At the time of menstruation, it is a process that Blood needs to gather in the Chong meridian or the Liver, then under the action of Liver Qi, the Blood is moved to the uterus to produce the menstrual flow. Dang Gui is an extremely important herb to regulate menstruation through this process. A story to help you remember this fact goes like this: a woman with menstrual disorders could not get pregnant after she married a man. Her husband was angry then left the home for a different city to do business and did not return. The woman then found Dang Gui and took it. After while, her period got normal, then she sent a message to her husband and told him that it should be the time for him to return home. Dang means should, Gui means return.

**【每日一药】乳香 (Ru Xiang)**  
为橄榄科植物乳香树及同属植物皮部渗出的树脂，气香烈。树脂者，树之液，犹人之血也。故此药善入血活血。因香气浓烈，故又善行气。血行气畅则痛止肿消肌生。(树脂可密封伤口，犹人伤之痊愈也，故此药为伤科要药。) **1.** 治跌打损伤，常配没药，血竭等，如七厘散。治疮痍肿痛，配没药，白芷，金银花等，如仙方活命饮。治瘰疬痰核，肿块坚硬，配麝香雄花等，如醒消丸。治疮疡久溃，配没药研末外用，如海浮散。 **2.** 治气滞血瘀痛

证。配没药，延胡索，香附，治胃痛，如手拈散。配丹参，川芎，治胸痹心痛。配当归，丹参，没药，治痛经经闭，如活血效灵丹。配羌活，防风，当归，治风寒湿痹，如蠲痹汤。

**【每日一药】金银花 (Jin Yin Hua)**  
为忍冬科植物的干燥花蕾。小枝细长，中空，赤褐色。花色初为白色，渐变为黄色，黄白相映，故名金银花。小枝细长中空向上，宣散之象。色白者，卫分之象，亦为湿为脓；色黄者，气分之象，亦为血为热。由白转黄，邪热由卫入气或由气入营之意。黄白相间，则示卫气同病，气营同病，或湿热并在，脓血相兼。 **1.** 治温病初起，身热头痛，配连翘，薄荷等，如银翘散。亦能透营转气，治热入营血之神昏心烦少寐，配犀角生地等，如清营汤。 **2.** 清热解毒，散痈，配紫花地丁，蒲公英等，如五味消毒饮。治疮痍初起，红肿热痛，可配皂刺白芷，如仙方活命饮。治肠痈，配当归，地榆等，如清肠饮。亦治肺痈。 **3.** 治热毒血痢，下利脓血，可单味浓煎口服，或与黄芩黄连白头翁同用。

**【每日一药】当归 (Dang Gui)**  
当归的饮片形如慧星。质地湿润，头坚实，尾分叉，尖锐如刃，又呈条状，如水之流。 **1.** 慧星定期回归，于人体似月事以时而下。故当归最是治疗月经不调的主将，调经的基本方四物汤中，当归不可或缺。 **2.** 归头坚实饱满，似物填补充实，故善补血，凡血虚之头晕心悸，月经量少延后，等等，归头为宜。 **3.** 归尾尖锐锋利，又呈条状，似水之流。故归尾善于活血。凡血瘀之肢体疼痛，外伤肿痛，经前疼痛，痹证疼痛，当归皆可使用。 **4.** 若血虚血瘀俱在，归头归尾当同用，谓之全当归。 **5.** 当归质润，又专入血分，故能润血，治疗血燥之皮肤干燥瘙痒。这亦是当归可以润肠通便，治疗肠燥便秘的原因。

# Lyme Disease

A Worm to be Discovered

**Written by Casey Kohlman R.Ac,  
Dr. Rebecca Risk TCMD, R.Ac, S.C.**

Lyme Disease is one of the fastest growing infectious diseases in the world today. Chronic Lyme was only just recognized as a disease by the Canadian Minister of Health. Transmission is commonly contracted from a tick bite however, it can be spread via mother's breast milk, semen, vaginal fluid, in utero, blood, tears, saliva, and bites from mosquitos and mites.

"A worm is more easily discovered, but very often it is the small things that are most potent and remain hidden in the dark." In the case of Lyme Disease, not many people realize they have been bitten by a tick let alone find a tick. Although Lyme Disease is commonly known to start with a target rash, only 10% of those infected develop the rash. Symptoms of Lyme Disease consist of flu-like symptoms, malaise, pain and fatigue. The list of symptoms for Chronic Lyme sufferers is long but can include joint pain, arthritis, fibromyalgia, cognitive dysfunction, digestive problems, nerve pain, etc. However

there are those who don't experience symptoms for many months or years. To complicate things, *Borrelia burgdorfi*, the spirochete that causes Lyme Disease is no longer a single infection. Symptoms vary depending on co-infections related to what the tick itself is infected with and the state of the patients' immune system. Co-infections all thrive upon each other's existence and symbiotically assist each other in the process of feeding upon their increasingly deficient host making it harder to treat the infection. It seems simple but all forms of medicine need to work together. Not one medical modality can address this adaptable disease on its own. Universally there is no accurate test for Lyme. Currently the common tests for *Borrelia burgdorfi* are EIA(Enzyme Immuno Assay) or ELISA(Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assay) followed by a Western Blot test if the EIA/ELISA comes back positive. What is being tested are the antigens and nucleic acids made in response to the infection and not the pathogen itself. A patient's immune response can be detected 2-3 weeks after infection while other antibodies are detected one month up to 25 years after infection. Antibody testing is not always actual as Lyme Disease is known for antigenic shifting, while 20-30% of patients never produce antibodies.

An alternative test is a PCR test which samples fluids and tissues, a positive PCR can be highly accurate. However a negative PCR only shows they did not find evidence in that sample but it could test positive in the same patient from a different location. The Government of Canada states it "follows diagnostic guidelines consistent with those in the United States and Europe." However the Canadian version of the Western Blot test is not as extensive as the United States Western blot test. The reliability of these tests are disputed among organizations. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states tests are dependable for late disease diagnosis while the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society(ILADS) counters they fully miss half of the late-stage cases. All organizations acknowledge the fact that more research is needed along with the development of accurate and reliable diagnostic methods for identifying

tick borne pathogens.

As practitioners of TCM there is little information about treating Lyme Disease. In China, the curriculum for Chinese Medicine is very standardized, omitting "Gu Syndrome" from the current teachings. Gu Syndrome refers to Chronic Inflammatory Syndrome, or a super-infection involving many different pathogens including funguses, viruses and spirochetes simultaneously, Lyme Disease being a perfect example of this. Unfortunately most TCM students or practitioners do not know what Gu Syndrome is. The combination of a weak immune system and the event of a tick bite or a mosquito sting creates a prime candidate for Gu Syndrome. Gu Syndrome is complex with a primary prerequisite of the patient having an element of digestive distress combined with neurological symptoms ranging from body pain to mental indicators of fogginess or hallucinations. These symptoms are unexplainable by the regular diagnostic patterning learned as a TCM student or with Western Medicine. With many mixed opinions about treatments from the conventional medical community as well as the alternative medical community, the Lyme patient ultimately suffers. The severity and treatment of Lyme Disease is often complicated due to late diagnoses, multiple co-infections, failure of antibiotic treatment, the formation of biofilm and immune suppression in the patient.

For the treatment of Lyme Disease, many doctors prescribe rounds of oral or intravenous antibiotics combined with antidepressants, anti-inflammatories and stomach antacids. Conventional antibiotic treatment has several disadvantages including relapse of the disease, high treatment cost, extremely unpleasant side effects and the development of biofilm. Once threatened the bacteria combine together to form biofilm and will then function as a single organism. Biofilm is difficult to eradicate, and has developed a high resistance to antibiotics and the body's natural defenses. Study results from the Oak Crest Institute of Science illustrate how bacterial biofilms can actually thrive, rather than decrease, when given antibiotics.

Results have been seen in the treatment of Lyme Disease using a rotation of antimicrobial herbs, Traditional Chinese herbs and natural supplements to support the body's healing and detoxification process. Not only do herbs fight infection and co-infections, they also decrease inflammation, increase immune function and aid the digestive system. Studies have shown that antimicrobial herbs outperform certain pharmaceutical antibiotics as herbs have a broad spectrum against microbes including biofilm which find it hard to adapt and ultimately survive.

In order to treat Lyme Disease we need everyone from the medical community to unite. Each modality has its expertise to bring to the table from testing, to diagnoses, to broad spectrum treatment. The only way to treat Lyme Disease is to "kill the bugs" (the bacteria causing the infection). Treating Lyme Disease can cause herxheimer (or "herx") reaction, which can ultimately lead the patient to feel worse before they feel better. Treatment should be done slowly, one step at a time to protect the patient from unwanted side effects. The journey to eradicate Lyme Disease is very challenging and may take between 2 to 4 years. During treatment it is important to listen to what the patient is experiencing and monitor how the patient's body is handling the protocol, making sure it hasn't become overburdened or too stressed. It is important the patient is supported during all phases of their treatment journey.

### **Casey Kohlman R.Ac Bio:**

After experiencing the healing effects of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine both physically and mentally Casey knew that this was a natural approach she wanted to share with others. After studying the philosophies and foundations of Chinese Medicine, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine for 3 years she graduated from the Alberta College of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine as a Registered Acupuncturist.

**Casey Kohlman R.Ac  
Ananta Health  
Calgary, AB  
dr-risk.com**

# An Interview with Peg Schafer

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## Author and Cultivator of Chinese Herbs

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## By Cynthia Quattro

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Photos by: Peg Schafer  
Featured: Salvia Miltiorrhiza

Peg Schafer is the owner/operator of the Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm outside Petaluma. This primarily educational and research farm has grown out more than 250 different Chinese herb crops over the past 15 years. She is the author of The Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm A Cultivator's Guide to Small-Scale Organic Herb Production recently published by Chelsea Green. Peg's focus in all endeavors is on growing the highest quality and most efficacious Chinese herbs possible.

Visit her website [chinesemedicinalherbfarm.com](http://chinesemedicinalherbfarm.com)

*"I would like to be an advocate not only for growers but for the plants themselves and of their medicine. It is important for people to know that growers can produce good quality herbs that are effective."*

*Bio: Cynthia Quattro is a Physician Assistant and Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. Her Integrative Medicine practice specializes in chronic disease and promotes health and wellness therapies. She grows and uses Chinese herb formulas as constitutional remedies. She also lectures at health medicine conferences and teaches doctoral students of acupuncture as well as writes for health and wellness publications. More info at [drquattro.com](http://drquattro.com)*



Cynthia Quattro,  
PA, LAc, DAOM

### Hello Peg.

*Thank you for taking the time for this interview. I am very interested to know more about the surging interest in domestically grown Chinese herbs. Locally sourced herbs would seem to be mutually beneficial for the practitioner and the patient but there are questions about their sustainability globally, and their medicinal potency.*

*My own experience with Chinese herbs began more than 20 years ago and during my studies in China I was able to visit where some of these herbs grew in their native environment. Wild harvested herbs were more widely available but with modernization the growing trends have changed. Your knowledge and experience growing Chinese herbs domestically is in demand during these changing times.*

*How did you begin learning about growing Chinese herbs?*

I was going to an acupuncturist and found herbs to be effective for my condition. Then my acupuncturist began giving me Chinese herb plants to grow in my garden. Up until that time I was the greenhouse manager on another farm. After two years of trialing and conducting a market analysis of growing and selling Chinese herbs I began to recognize their unique growing characteristics and began a business growing them. That was 18 years ago.

*What did you notice when growing them initially that made them seem unique?*

Whereas vegetables are annuals, most Chinese herbs are perennials. Perennials are a lot easier

to grow. These plants are also more "wild", meaning they don't require as much attention and soil cultivation. When there is less disturbance to the growing environment and soil food web it encourages a healthier eco system. Since they have not been domesticated, essentially "unselected", I found the more they were left to grow naturally, and stressed by natural conditions, they seemed to express themselves more as they would in nature. And being more in line with nature also leaves the ecosystem more intact.

*One of the leading concerns for the herbalists is the content and quality of the medicinal ingredients. What have you found in testing domestically grown herbs compared to those grown in China?*

Herbs that have been grown domestically have been tested and found to have as much or more constituent values according to the materia medica than some of the ones imported. We started investigating why that is the case.

Since everything is tracked and farm mapped we found that it was the herbs that were less cared for with less inputs and nutrients, and grown more leanly that actually produced more constituents that practitioners were looking for.

*I see a lot of chronic disease in my practice. I find if I add just the right tonic herbs to their formula, (often classified as adaptogens), regardless of what else they are taking for their condition, they improve. Do you think domestically grown Chinese herbs can provide the potency expected of these types of herbs?*

Besides herbal manufacturers, proprietary corporations, universities, and the U.S. forest service have tested locally grown herbs and some have shown equal or even more active constituents than those imported from China. Some speculate that since domestic herbs are fresher when tested they may show an increase in their active constituents.

*If these herbs express better medicinal properties if they are grown more "wild", how can growers preserve their "wild nature"? Is it the seed quality that they should aim to preserve?*

Genetics of the seed certainly are a factor in its medicinal properties. There is a whole world to traditional plant breeding and here on the CMHF we are guided by “wild” intentions. Also the integrated farming systems of polyculture. This might include not only limited row cropping, and forest farming but also companion planting. We avoid mono cropping but grow mini crops together which creates a whole environment with a biologically intact situation of soil, flora, and fauna. In this way, small insects all work in a community unlike in a mono culture where there are only a few sets of insects to pollinate. As long as there are enough plants for genetic stability this ends up giving more biodiversity to the plants and their seeds and is more healthy for their environment and eco system.

*On a practical level do you think is there enough of a demand for locally grown Chinese herbs?* There is a huge demand from all sectors not just eastern or western practitioners. There is also a growing demand from the manufactures trade, tea companies, nutraceutical companies, tincture makers, topical treatment manufacturers. Considering the negative press about the questionable purity of the herbs from China, I don't have to spend a lot of time trying to sell them.

*What about the higher cost? Herbs grown and packaged here cost a lot more to the consumer than those that are imported. Do you think the market will adjust to the higher costs?* As a domestic industry I don't think they will be able to compete based on price, but will rely more on the accountability of its sources and the freshness and cleanliness. It is an alternative to questionable sources and quality from China.

*In Native American traditions there is a commonly known reverence to protect the earth, especially in regards to plants that have traditionally been their food and medicine. Do you see yourself in a similar way almost as a protector of Chinese herbs or of their medicine or both?* I never really thought of it that way but I do think of myself as a protector since they are being beleaguered from a conservation point of view. They are being over harvested and

farmland is being taken out of production due to pollution, land conversion for housing, livestock grazing, mining; climate change is one of the biggest challenges that is affecting herbs in a pronounced way.

While the amount of arable land per capita in China is very low, this shortage leaves little land available for herb crops. In an effort to increase agricultural production wetlands continue to be drained – this issue is not exclusive to China but is a worldwide problem.

Some of the herbs prefer to grow in specific niches like higher elevations or stream side, pond side or wetlands –these are vulnerable locations.



*Alisma plantago-aquatica, Ze xie*

An “ah ha” moment as a gardener. This medicinal plant, *Alisma plantago-aquatica* subs. *orientale* Ze xie, is one that grows in shallow water. Its medicinal properties include removing excess dampness from the body. Most medicinal plants not only heal us but heal the earth.

*What suggestions can you offer for someone who is interested in growing Chinese herbs on a small scale or large scale or even as a backyard grower. Should they try to grow ones that are tending toward extinction or mainly the more common ones?*

For a backyard gardener, or growing just a few plants, they should grow ones they plan to use. Be it a food plant or a spirit plant or one they just have an affinity for. Because having a personal association with the plant will tend to make it

more likely they would take care of it and have the desire to see it flourish.



*Astragalus membranaceus, Huang qi*

For farmers it can be more of an ethical situation. The tendency might be more towards wild cultivation. If they grow herbs that are starting to become endangered and if they have the right ecosystem, we lessen the impact on the wild. As more herbs are taken out of China we are lessening the comprehensive gene pool which make them more vulnerable for extinction. Some have long reproductive cycles if we are not careful we may lose some herbs.

On the other hand, farmers will need to include herbs that will help them make a living. Some common herbs that are relatively easy to grow include *Chrysanthemum morifolium*, Ju hua, which provides a good harvest every year and makes a very good tea. *Agastache rugosa* or Korean mint, Tu hou xiang, is also easy to grow.

*Scutellaria baicalensis*, Huang qin, *Astragalus membranaceus*, Huang qi are both grown for their medicinal roots. It generally takes 3 -4 years before harvest but they also have attractive flowers.

*Your book, is a valuable resource for growing Chinese herbs. What made you decide to write it and how did it evolve?*

The book has been a work in progress over the past 16 years. I kept a database of everything I grew and the conditions and results of my growing methods. There has been so much interest in growing Chinese herbs that I wrote

it as a resource not only for students and practitioners that want to learn more about the herbs they are using in their clinics, but also as a springboard for farmers interested in growing them as a business. I have been surprised by its distribution since it has spread from the US to international destinations as well.



*Scutellaria baicalensis, Huang qin*

*Learning and experiencing growing Chinese herbs on your farm has been such a rewarding experience. Seeing the herbs growing and thriving in a natural environment has shed a beacon of light on a troubling issue for myself and the herbalist community. For me, I feel more drawn to seek out resources to preserve this growing trend and continue its progress. You are one of the pioneers in the preservation of Chinese herbal medicine. Do you have any last thoughts to share?*

As we are exceeding the carrying capacity of China for herbal medicine we need to be growing as many of these herbs in countries where there is the demand and where they will be used. The magic of the herbs apply to all beings not just human beings, animals and earth beings as well. Earth takes care of itself and provides its own balance in nature.

*Thank you Peg, for all of this valuable information and especially in teaching us how to take care of the Earth's natural medicine.*

*I wish you the best of luck with all of your endeavors,*

*Cynthia Quattro*



# ***TCM and Pediatrics***

***Shilo Cameron, R.TCM.P  
Owner and founder of  
Balanced Health Acupuncture and Wellness Clinic***

When I studied TCM, the focus on pediatrics was minimal. If your school was anything like mine, so was yours. It wasn't until the birth of my first son four and a half years ago, that I experienced a fundamental shift in perspective.

As he grew, I realized that my passion for Chinese Medicine needed to expand to include the treatment of children. Now, with my second child almost two, acupuncture, tuina and herbs are the number one choices of treatment in our household. These experiences in treating my

own children first hand led me to advance my study of TCM in pediatrics with Robin Green, an expert in the field of pediatric Acupuncture.

I know we all have the incredible potential to heal ourselves. Teaching children about this innate ability has become my passion, and helping them to grow into stronger, healthier, more confident and balanced adults is my intent.

When parents take their little ones to their family doctor, they often leave feeling powerless

and/or frustrated when common ailments like ear infections, colds, flus, persistent coughs, skin conditions, digestive issues or croup, go unresolved even after prescription medications have been used. Additionally, many parents feel that they have received little helpful advice from their health care providers. This deficit provides TCM practitioners a golden opportunity to educate parents and caregivers about the value and effectiveness of herbal medicine, acupuncture and tuina massage in treating common childhood ailments. It is a process to

educate parents about the power that TCM holds in helping to treat their children in the acute stage as well as the chronic and wellness/maintenance stage. I strive to get the families I treat to the point where their first thought moves from "call my family doctor" to "Call my TCM doctor/practitioner". With that being said, it is certainly important to be confident in all of the "red flags" in order to know when referring to a family doctor or hospital is what is required.

## ***Acupuncture Treatment***

Alex Tiberi, the world-renowned pediatric expert has been quoted as saying that the meridians begin developing at the time of conception and continue through pregnancy. The meridians are not fully developed at birth and at this time they mirror the child's birth constitution. The meridians continue transformation until about age 7 or 8. If you treat a child with acupuncture and good nutrition during the initial 7-8 years of life, you can actually CHANGE the constitution of the child. This is extremely powerful and inspiring information!

Because children have such an abundance of Qi, treatment times are shorter than the hour-long sessions typically performed on adults. They also respond rather quickly compared to adults. Their patterns have not been around for as long as the average adults, because they are still so young, and parents are more likely to address their children's health issues than their own. Children do not usually have the same emotional attachment to their patterns as adults do, and their bodies are ready, open and willing to heal! I often use children and animals as an example when asked by a skeptical patient "Do I have to believe in this in order for it to work?" My answer goes something like "Absolutely not, children and animals don't have any preconceived ideas, and they get great results! However, if your mind is open and you allow your body to simply heal itself without limits, you WILL get more bang for your buck!"

When performing acupuncture on newborn to age 5 the needles are not retained, subsequently, they do not need to SIT STILL! They can

play on the floor, in their parents lap or on the acupuncture table. For children 5-8, needles are retained for 5-10min, for ages 10-12 needles are retained for 10-15min, and for 12 and up, retention is for 20-30min. I refer to the needles themselves as “taps” in an attempt to avoid invoking unnecessary negative emotions, such as fear or worry within the child. I also incorporate other non-needle techniques, such as laser pen or micro current, if a child is not ready for acupuncture. Micro current finds electrically active points and uses 5, 10 or 20 HZ frequencies to treat the point and is painless. Low-level lasers regenerate cells, decrease pain and inflammation and improve circulation. The laser stimulates the bodies Qi and is conducted through the meridians and has a measurable effect on the brain similar to acupuncture. The blue laser sedates and the red laser tonifies. I always respect where the child is at and never want them to feel pressured to do anything they are not comfortable with or ready for.

### ***5-Elements: Understanding the Child***

By utilizing the Five Elements system of diagnosis significant insight can be gained to help both the practitioner and parent. Because each element has its own list of strengths and weaknesses, highlighting and uncovering these can not only help guide the practitioner in treatment, but can also allow the parent to understand their child in a more objective way.

For example, a child who is predominantly Wood may anger easily; be curious; be labeled “troublemaker” by some; have issues with boundaries and authority figures like teachers and parents; be very athletic and competitive; have tantrums and outbursts; be easily stimulated; be very driven, goal oriented and adventurous and, be described as born leaders.

In these children, helpful suggestions to parents may include having lots of physical outlets that help them to positively channel their energy; setting goals and limits; being involved in team sports and/or social groups; providing play time before school to improve their ability to pay attention and “stay in their seat”.

### ***TCM herbal therapy:***

I will often incorporate pediatric herbal tinctures from Kan’s Gentle Warriors line, and Golden Flower. For example, Golden Flower’s Children’s Ear Formula combined with 3 drops of colloidal silver directly in the ear will often bring immediate relief for most ear infections. Colloidal silver is a natural broad spectrum antiseptic that fights infection, subdues inflammation and promotes healing. Children’s Ear Formula is given orally and is helpful in treating both otitis media and otitis externa within two hours. This formula clears heat, resolves toxins and dampness while relieving pain. This combination is an alternative to antibiotics, however if it is unresponsive within 24 hours consulting with your family doctor is always advised. It is also important to note that the above treatment addresses the branch and therefore it is important to also look at the root once the pain and infection have resolved.

Parents often have questions about how to boost the immune system in their little ones. The go to Western approach is getting the annual flu shot! My TCM recommendations are certainly more rounded than that. A great tincture is Children’s Jade Defense Formula Syrup, the pediatric version of Yu Ping Feng San. It is a wonderful formula to supplement Wei Qi and I recommend taking it daily during cold and flu season or as extra support prior to the start of a new school year. The TCM recommendation of bone broth is another wonderful tool for parents to help support and supplement their children’s Spleen and Stomach, along with a high quality probiotic, approximately 15-30 billion CFU. Probiotics are energetically warm and tonify and strengthen the Spleen. From a western perspective, without adequate “good bacteria” in our guts, we are not as able to absorb nutrients from our food, which, in TCM, translates to the transformation and transportation function of our Spleen/Stomach. Since 70-80% of our immune cells are found in our gut lining, it makes sense from an Eastern or Western perspective to supplement with probiotics. It is important to remember that compared to thousands of years ago the standard diet has changed drastically. With a higher consumption of genetically modified

foods, sugars and refined carbohydrates, toxins, pesticides, chemicals and hormones along with other unnatural food additives, dietary recommendations and extra support to the middle jiao is a necessity.

From Kan’s Gentle Warriors line, Windbreaker is the pediatric variation on Yin Qiao San and Sang Ju Yin, and is the formula I turn to for acute invasion of external pathogenic Wind-Heat and Phlegm. I feel this is one that all parents should have on hand! Another one I often reach for in the clinic is Kan’s, Easy Going. It is especially helpful when infants are struggling with constipation due to food stagnation and activates the Qi of the Intestines. When combined with acupuncture points such as ST-25, Sp-6 and auricular therapy for constipation, clockwise circle rubbing on the abdomen, as well as dietary recommendations such as poached pear, avocado, apple (assuming solid food has been introduced) the child will most often have a decrease in discomfort as well as a bowel movement within the first 12-24hrs of treatment.

### ***Tuina***

The book, *Chinese Pediatric Massage Therapy*, by author Fan Ya-li is a wonderful reference. It gives specific massage protocols for the treatment of common pediatric diseases. Tui-Na massage is an incredibly powerful tool to teach to parents as it gives parents effective, hands on healing method that most children really enjoy.

The points below are a combination of 5 powerful manipulations that can be incorporated as a nightly routine for children 12 years of age and younger for overall well being assuming there are no other acute or chronic patterns at play. The following protocol can stimulate the body to heal itself and correct subtle imbalances before they become problems. Since the digestive system plays such an important role in the state of our health, most of the points focus on supporting this. Many pediatric massage techniques recommend rubbing 100-500 times (depending on age, for example, infant 100x’s, 10-12 years old 500 times) which seems like a lot, however, the manipulations used are rapidly repeated so it

only takes 45 seconds to a few minutes to treat each area fully.

- 1. Circular-rubbing the abdomen: rub clockwise with the hollow of the palm 100-500 times. This helps improve digestion and harmonizes the stomach and intestines*
- 2. Circular-rubbing the palms: 100-300x’s this harmonizes the major organs and tonifies Qi and Blood.*
- 3. Line-pressing the thumb: 100-300x’s on the lateral part of the thumb next to the tip of the finger nail and rub downward in the direction towards the base of the thumb where it meets with the wrist. This strengthens the spleen and supplements the center.*
- 4. Kneading ST 36: 50-100x’s this is called “kneading the Three Li” and improves digestion by harmonizing the stomach and intestines.*
- 5. Pinching pulling manipulation on the back: This strengthens the righteous Qi of the entire body and benefits the constitution. At the level of the jia ji points, gently pinch the skin between the thumb and index finger and roll upwards. Start from the tailbone to the base of the neck and repeat 3-5x’s.*

Pediatric acupuncturists can have a real impact on a family’s health and well-being, and I feel strongly that there is a need for more practitioners to become experts in the field. Personally I find working with young people rewarding and refreshing! Seeing a baby, toddler or pre-teen in my schedule lights up my day. I look forward to the interaction every time, knowing that I am helping to facilitate the growth of a healthier, more confident and energetically open adult.

***Shilo Cameron,  
R.TCM.P***

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